

REMARKS**I. Office Action Summary**

In the non-final Office Action dated August 1, 2003, the Examiner presented new rejections regarding claims 1-12. The Examiner rejected claims 1-12 as obvious under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) in view of the following combination of references:

| <u>Claims</u> | <u>Prior Art Reference(s)</u> |
|----------------------|---|
| 1 and 11 | Hogan et al. (US 6,016,343) + Crawford (US 5,901,228) |
| 3 and 8 | Hogan + Pepe et al. (US 5,742,905) |
| 4, 6 | Hogan + Crawford + Pepe |
| 2, 5, 7, 9-10 and 12 | Hogan + Crawford + Official Notice |

II. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103**A. Rejection of claims 1 and 11 over Hogan et al. and Crawford et al.**Claim 1

The Examiner has rejected claim 1 as obvious over Hogan et al. (US 6,016,343) in combination with Crawford et al. (U.S. 5,901,228). Applicant respectfully traverses. Claim 1 relates to a system for generating billing and computer usage information for unrelated host computer networks using security services from a remotely located security server. The system includes, *inter alia*:

a user authentication system comprising:
means for determining if a remotely located computer user is authorized to access one of the plurality of unrelated host computer networks;
means for establishing a connection between the remotely located computer user and one of the plurality of unrelated host computer networks if the remotely located user is an authorized remotely located user for the one of the plurality of unrelated computer networks; and

means for generating and storing a user log, the user log having a list of computer usage time for authorized users connected to the plurality of unrelated host computer networks via the user authentication system; and
a billing application in communication with the database and the user authentication system, the billing application responsive to receipt of the user log from the user authentication system to generate a bill and computer usage summary for each of the plurality of unrelated host computer networks based on the list of fees in the database.

(emphasis added)

Applicant has amended claim 1 to clarify aspects of the user authentication system and the billing and usage report application.

Claim 1 recites "means for determining if a remotely located computer user is authorized to access one of the plurality of unrelated host computer networks" subscribing to the third party service. Neither Hogan nor Crawford teach or suggest computer user authentication means such as a third party authentication system where various host computer networks can subscribe to have their remotely located computer users authenticated.

Claim 1 also recites "means for establishing a connection" between the remote user and a particular host computer network "if the remotely located user is an authorized remotely located user for the one of the plurality of unrelated computer networks." Neither Hogan nor Crawford teach or suggest connections between unrelated host networks and their respective authorized users via an authorization function outsourced to a third party authentication service.

Additionally, claim 1 recites "means for generating and storing a user log, the user log having a list of computer usage time for authorized users". Neither Hogan nor Crawford relate to tracking computer usage at unrelated host computer networks

Another feature of claim 1 missing from either of the cited reference is a "billing application responsive to receipt of the user log from the user authentication system to generate a bill and computer usage summary for each of the plurality of unrelated host computer networks." Because neither Hogan nor Crawford relate to authenticating computer users to host computer networks, neither reference teaches

or suggests creating bills for the host computer networks or computer usage summaries for the host computer networks in concert with remoter computer user authentication services to the host computer networks.

Hogan teaches generic telephone call services, such as billing and tracking calls in a telephone network. The two page quotation from Hogan set out in the office action of August 1 (believed to be from Col. 7, lines 25-67 of Hogan) describes providing call cost estimates, debit card call handling, a telephone bill based on call length and rate, and etc. This is unrelated to a system for allowing a host computer network to use a third party security service to authenticate its users and to provide the host computer network with billing and computer usage information as is claimed in claim 1.

Similarly, Crawford fails to teach or suggest the features of claim 1 identified above. Crawford discusses "an on-line service that allows remote computer users to connect on-line to computer devices (e.g. 'virtual' disks) and access them to do such things as run computer software from them" (Crawford, Col. 1, lines 15-20). Examples of on-line services disclosed in Crawford include data storage (Col. 13, lines 31-51), and up-to-date software access (Col. 14, lines 1-21). The services are disclosed as all residing at a host computer which handles its own access security and bills its own subscribers (Col. 50, line 31 – Col. 51, line 5).

Applicant notes that the Examiner cited to a passage in Crawford regarding billing of long distance charges being handled by a long distance telco (See Col. 51, lines 5-21), however this passage appears to merely address a warning the host sends the customer. Specifically, the cited passage explains that the host gives the customer the opportunity to hang up without charges if the customer has made a toll call to the host and, if the customer accepts the service charges, that the telephone bill from the customer's telephone company will list the charge. Thus, Crawford does not disclose a host computer network using a third party authentication service or the third party authentication service providing computer usage and billing information to the host computer network.

Because both Hogan and Crawford lack at least the features of claim 1 discussed above, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is allowable over the art of record. Reconsideration is respectfully solicited.

Claims 2-10 and 17-20 are dependent claims, therefore their allowability directly follows from the allowability of independent claim 1.

Claim 11

The Examiner has also rejected independent claim 11 as obvious over the combination of Hogan and Crawford. Applicant respectfully traverses. Although Applicant believes that the previous version of claim 11 sufficiently distinguished over these references, Applicant has amended claim 11 to better clarify the claimed method and broaden certain aspects of the claim. As amended, claim 11 relates to a method of monitoring computer usage through authorization of remote computer users to their host computer networks using a third party network access server and providing usage and billing information to the appropriate unrelated host computer networks. The method of amended claim 11 includes, *inter alia*, the acts of:

receiving at a communication server a request from a remotely located computer user to access one of the plurality of unrelated host computer networks;

automatically transmitting information regarding the request from the communication server to the network access server, the information comprising identification information for the remotely located computer user; determining at the network access server if the user is authorized to access the one of the plurality of unrelated host computer networks;

establishing a connection between the remotely located computer user and the one of the plurality of unrelated host computer networks via the communication server if the remotely located user is an authorized remotely located user for the one of the plurality of unrelated host computer networks;

storing computer usage time for the authorized remotely located computer user in a user log at the network access server after the authorized remotely located computer user disconnects from the one of the plurality of unrelated host computer networks whereby the user log contains a record of computer time usage for each authorized user;

for each of the plurality of unrelated host computer networks, generating a billing and computer time usage summary, each billing and computer time usage summary listing charges and computer time usage for a respective one of the plurality of unrelated host computer networks; and

electronically transmitting each billing and computer usage summary to an appropriate one of the plurality of unrelated host computer networks.

(emphasis added)

Applicant incorporates the descriptions and discussion of the Hogan and Crawford references provided above. Claim 11 recites acts of determining computer network authorization at a third party network access server and connecting the authorized user to the appropriate host computer network. Applicant submits that the cited references lack any teaching of at least the highlighted portions of claim 11 above. Hogan and Crawford completely lack any teaching or suggestion of an authentication process between remote users and host computer networks using a third party network access server. Claim 11 also recites specific acts of a monitoring/billing process integrated with the third party network access server. Again, the cited references refer to standard telephone billing and do not relate to a method where unrelated host computer networks use a third party network access server to authenticate users and provide the host computer networks with billing and computer usage information.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 11 distinguishes over the cited art. Claims 12-16 are dependent claims, therefore their allowability directly follows from allowability of independent claim 11.

B. Rejection of claims 3 and 8 over Hogan and Pepe et al. (US 5,742,905)

Claims 3 and 8 depend from independent claim 1; therefore Applicant submits that these claims are allowable for at least the same reasons as provided for claim 1.

C. Rejection of claims 4 and 6 over Hogan, Crawford and Pepe

Claims 4 and 6 depend from independent claim 1; therefore Applicant submits that these claims are allowable for at least the same reasons as provided for claim 1

D. Rejection of claims 2, 5, 7, 9-10 and 12 over Hogan, Crawford and Official Notice

Claims 2, 5, 7, 9-10 and 12 depend from independent claim 1; therefore Applicant submits that these claims are allowable for at least the same reasons as provided for claim 1.

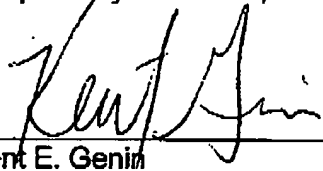
III. New Claims 13-20

Applicant has added new dependent claims. New claims 13-16 depend from independent claim 11. New claims 17-20 depend from independent claim 1. Applicant submits that the original specification as filed fully supports the added dependent claims and that no new matter has been added. Examples of support for the subject matter of claims 13-16 may be found at paragraphs 0016 through 0019 in the specification. Support for claim 17-20 may also be found throughout the specification, for example at paragraphs 0019-0020.

IV. Conclusion

In light of the above amendment and remarks, Applicant submits that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance. Applicant reserves the right to refile unamended claims 1 and 11 in a continuation application. If any questions arise or issues remain, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number listed below in order to expedite disposition of this application. Reconsideration and allowance of pending claims 1-20 is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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